



# **SOUTH HERO LAND TRUST**

*Newsletter*

*Spring 2015*

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## **Changes and Transitions: Next Steps for SHLT Staff & Organization**



### **Executive Director Steps Down after 16 Amazing Years**

South Hero Land Trust's first staff was hired shortly after the successful conclusion of the conservation project that precipitated the formation of the organization, Allenholt Farm. In 1999 Minner Hobbs Conboy was hired as the Membership and Development Coordinator. Minner soon after became Executive Director and remained with the organization for almost 16 years, 12 more conservation projects, two more staff hires, and countless community events and programs.

As of 2015, South Hero Land Trust has conserved over 1,700 acres of productive farmland, shoreline, and natural habitat in South Hero. With over 600 members, a committed board of directors, and strong partnerships with land conservation and community organizations across the state, Minner has helped to build South Hero Land Trust into a nimble, innovative organization, grounded in the South Hero landscape and community. With enormous thanks for her many years of service to the community, and great excitement for the new directions in which she is heading, South Hero Land Trust is sad to announce that Minner will be stepping down as Executive Director in July.

### **New Staff Leadership for South Hero Land Trust**

Programs Director Emily Alger, who has been with the organization for 6 years, will be taking over Minner's position as Executive Director in mid-July. An Islands native, Emily has taken leadership of the South Hero Land Trust Farm Initiative as well as community events and classes. From producing the Champlain Islands Grown Guide to Agriculture and helping build the Lake Champlain Islands Agriculture Network, to organizing farm tours, cooking demonstrations, and Green Up Day, Emily has been out in the community connecting people with local farms and the South Hero landscape. South Hero Land Trust is excited that she will be stepping into Minner's role in late July, and providing leadership for the next chapter of land conservation and community work in South Hero.

If you have questions about the transition, please be in touch! Call 372-3786, e-mail Emily at [emily@shlt.org](mailto:emily@shlt.org) or e-mail Minner at [minner@shlt.org](mailto:minner@shlt.org). We hope you will join us on July 19<sup>th</sup> for our Annual Celebration at East Shore Vineyard, to celebrate another amazing year of land conservation and community in South Hero, and to wish Minner well and good luck in her future endeavors!

# SOUTH HERO



# LAND TRUST

a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the farmland, woodland, natural and recreational areas, and open spaces which give South Hero its distinctive quality of life.

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## Board of Directors

Bob Chutter

Dick Heilman

Christine Mack

Lisa Pendolino

Bob Reese

Steven Robinson

Kathleen Swanson

Reina Warren

Peter Zamore

## Staff

Minner Hobbs  
Executive Director

Emily Alger  
Programs Director

# Looking Back, Looking Forward

## A Letter from the Executive Director & Photos from the Archives

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

*I was out cutting lilacs, lily of the valley, and snowball viburnum last weekend and feeling so fortunate that when you need it most, nature is so generous to us. The blooms were dripping with their pungent perfume and I was uplifted by their abundance, color, and beauty. Happy spring!*

*As we transition into warmer, greener months in the Islands, South Hero Land Trust too is making some big transitions. As you have heard or read in this newsletter, I am stepping down from my post. As I hope you can imagine, I've given this decision a great deal of thought. I have spent the better part of my adult life committed to South Hero Land Trust and I could not be more proud of the work we have accomplished together and the relationships I have built with each of you.*

*Working with South Hero Land Trust for the last 16 year has been enormously rewarding and fulfilling. This past winter my son Owen was born, and I hope that one day he too will find such good work and deep meaning in his own life.*

*Looking through old photographs as we prepared to print this newsletter, brought back waves of memories. Upon hearing my news the other day, my good friend and colleague from VLT, Gil Livingston said, "I hope you'll take time to reflect on your many accomplishments." I pretty much always take Gil's advice, and so I find myself feeling*



Landon Community Trail Opening, 2011.  
Left to right: Charlie Tipper, Kathleen Swanson, Dick & Barbara Heilman, 2 LCLT Board Members, Chris Boget (LCLT), Annette Burger and her daughters, Minner Hobbs Conboy.

*nostalgic and retracing my journey through all we have done together.*

*I could fill a book with all of my special memories of working with landowners, partner organizations, and community members. There is nothing quite like the feeling of being welcomed into someone's home to talk about their plans for their future and the future of their beloved land. Having the chance to eat a meal around their*



Educational trip to a Vermont Dairy Farm.  
From left to right: Charlie Tipper, Kathleen Swanson, Minner Hobbs Conboy, Stonebroke Farm owner, Mitzi Johnson, Rick Abare, and Ohmer Corbin.



dinner table, hear stories and dreams of yesteryear and dreams for the next generation. I'd like to thank each person who dedicated so much time and energy to land conservation over the years - those who have conserved their land and those who decided against it, it was all important time spent with thoughtful community members. Conservation projects are often years in the making and I cherish those years and those relationships.

Each project and each family I've worked with hold a special place in my memory. I've benefited from the wisdom of so many: Ron and Celia Hackett's kind advice and accurate weather forecasts, dairy 101 from the Maxhams, growing and nurturing soil from Eric Noel, and of course I've learned about generosity from those who have donated conservation

easements and those who have donated dollars to our work. One project is close to my heart because of links to my own childhood - Islandacres Farm. As a young child, Patsy Robinson babysat for me and my siblings. I developed a love of "high fat milk" as we called it back then, from the Robinson's fresh milk pails. Hank and Patsy welcomed our family into the community right from the beginning, bringing us blankets when we first moved here, unaccustomed to the cold winters. What an honor, decades later, to have the chance to work with the Robinsons to reach their goal of transferring their farm to their son Steve. I felt like the luckiest person in the world when we closed that project!



Islandacres Farm, conserved by the Robinson Family in 2008.

South Hero Land Trust and I have grown up together. I was fresh out of college when I began my time at SHLT and the organization had only been in existence for a year and a half. I had so much to learn about everything. I toured farms all over the state, learning about dairy farming. Though I had plenty of experience growing flowers and plants in the garden, I began to learn about Vermont's rare plant species when we found the Pale Vetchling on the bluff overlooking the Round Pond at Apple Island Resort. I'll never forget the realization when I went on my first fundraising ask that I was actually going to have to ask someone for money! And then quickly understanding that it really wasn't that hard to ask, because I believed and continue to believe so strongly in the work of SHLT. There have been so many lessons learned along the way and so many mentors. Charlie Tipper was one of the best teachers I've ever had! It takes many hands to do this important work, the support of the community, great staff, thoughtful board members, and dependable and resourceful partners and colleagues. Together we've grown our membership to over 600 members, we've conserved over 1,700 acres, we've raised millions of dollars for conservation, we've built innovative partnerships with farms through our Farm Initiative, and so much more - thanks to you!

I leave the organization in capable hands. We have a dedicated and energetic group of leaders on our Board of Directors, led by the thoughtful Bob Chutter. Emily Alger, our fantastic Programs Director, has been asked to be the new Executive Director and we are very fortunate that she has accepted! She has been and will continue to be a tremendous asset to the organization. Please join me in welcoming her into this new role.

It has been an honor to work with and for you all of these years. My connections to South Hero are deep and I will always remain connected to South Hero Land Trust and this community. I will continue to be a member of the organization, and a resource when needed. And now onto the next part of my journey, raising my son and nurturing his ethic of care for the natural world and our agricultural heritage.

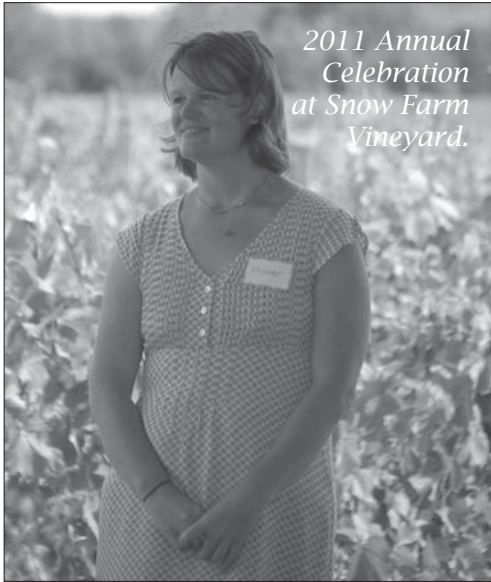
With sincere thanks to each of you for making these past 16 years so rewarding.

With love and appreciation,

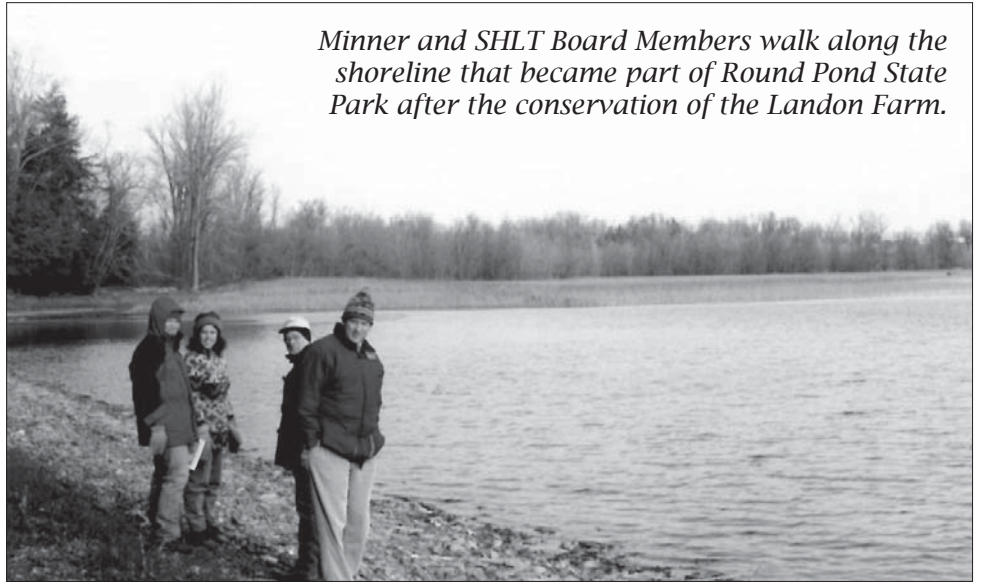


Passing the baton, Minner to Emily!

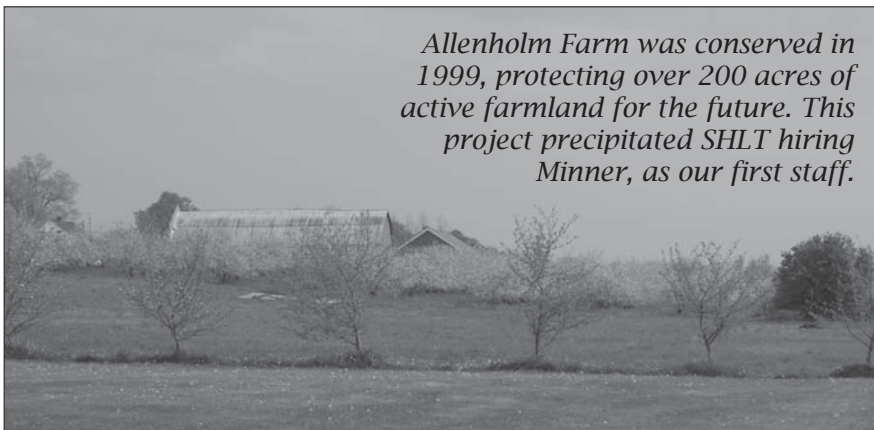
# With Thanks & Appreciation: Memories from 16 Years of Work with Minner



*2011 Annual  
Celebration  
at Snow Farm  
Vineyard.*



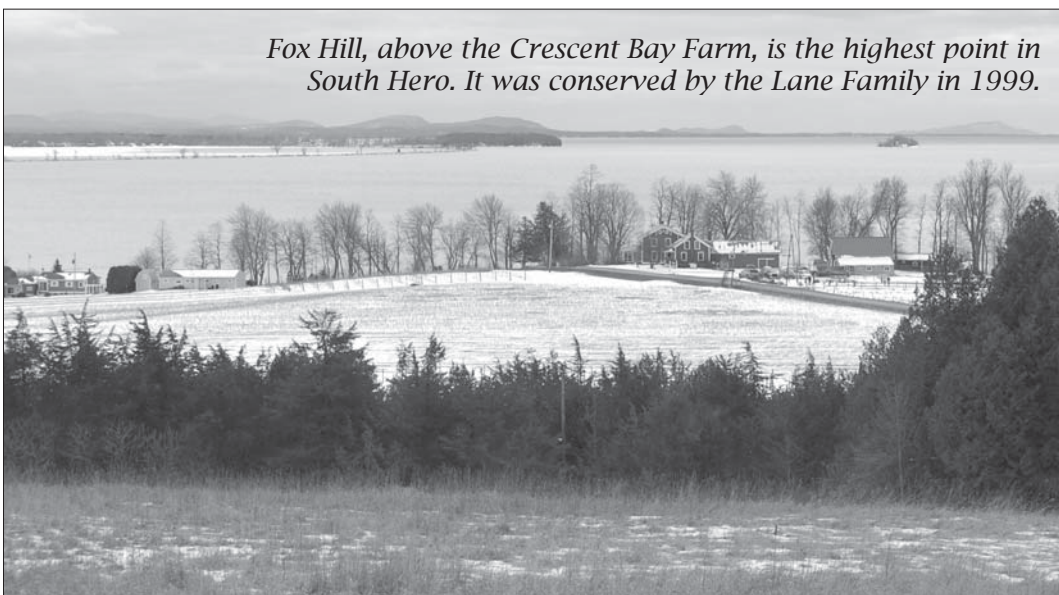
*Minner and SHLT Board Members walk along the shoreline that became part of Round Pond State Park after the conservation of the Landon Farm.*



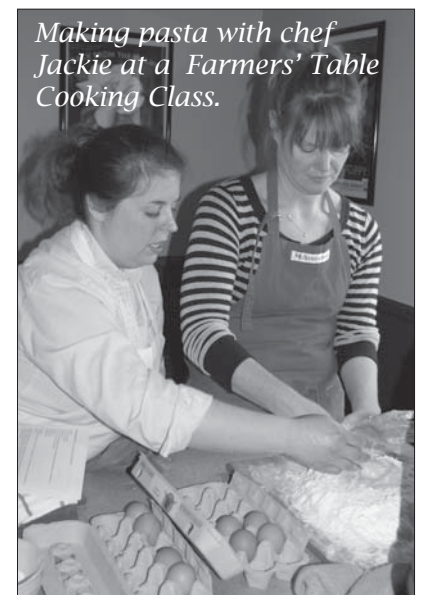
*Allenholm Farm was conserved in 1999, protecting over 200 acres of active farmland for the future. This project precipitated SHLT hiring Minner, as our first staff.*



*Minner and her niece clean up White's Beach on Green Up Day.*



*Fox Hill, above the Crescent Bay Farm, is the highest point in South Hero. It was conserved by the Lane Family in 1999.*

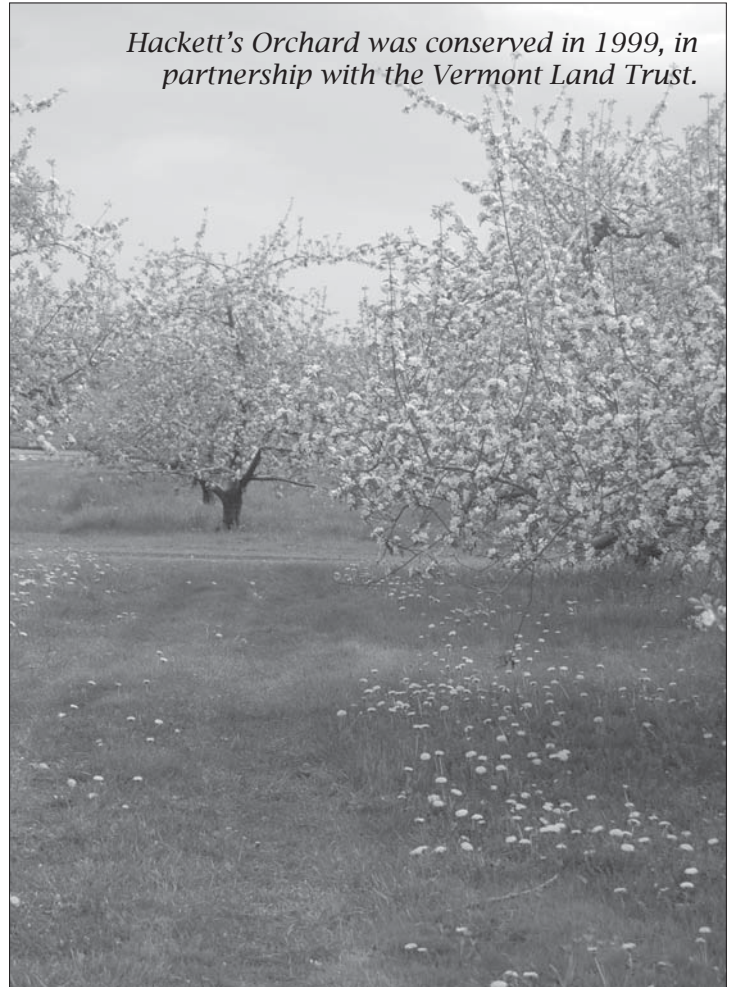


*Making pasta with chef Jackie at a Farmers' Table Cooking Class.*

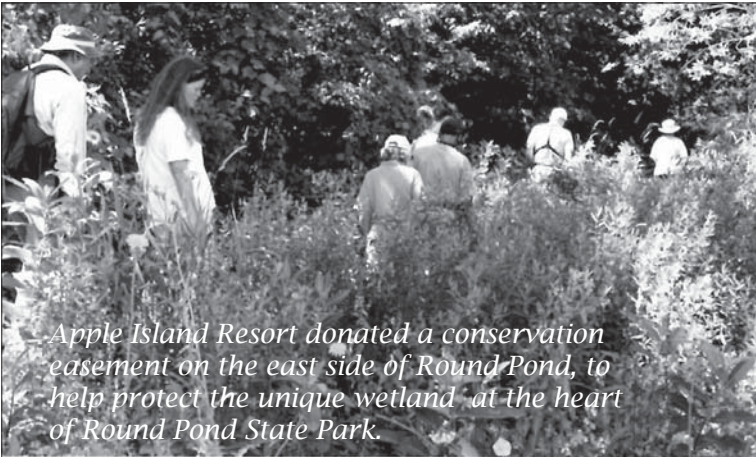
*Sawyer Bay Farm, the new home of Health Hero Farm, was conserved in 2013. Combining a commitment to sustainable agriculture and water protection, the new farmers hope to create a model operation for VT.*



*Hackett's Orchard was conserved in 1999, in partnership with the Vermont Land Trust.*



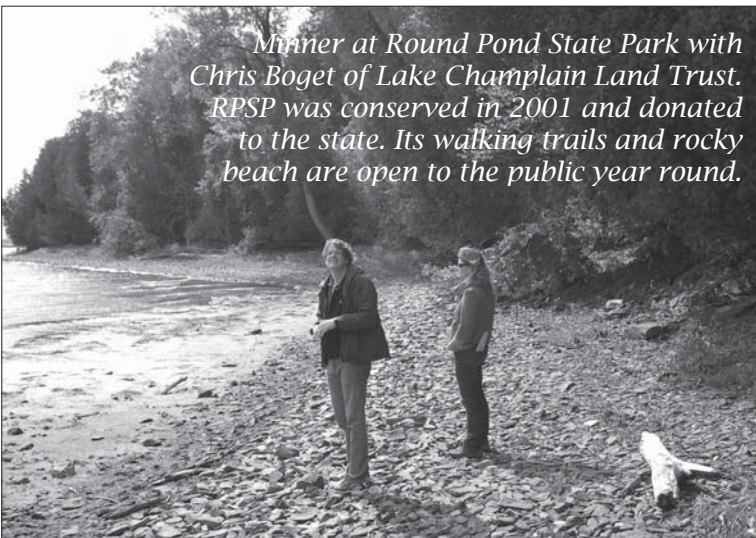
*Apple Island Resort donated a conservation easement on the east side of Round Pond, to help protect the unique wetland at the heart of Round Pond State Park.*



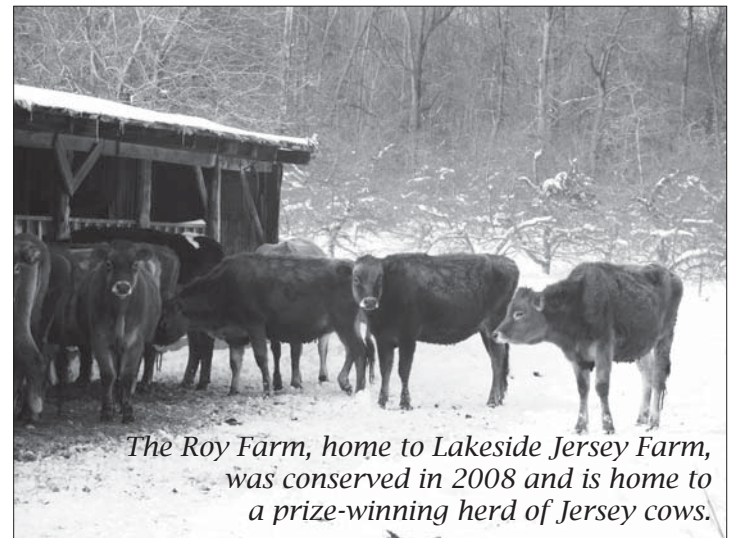
*The Landon Community Trail opened in 2011, welcoming visitors to explore a local woodland and working farm.*



*Minner at Round Pond State Park with Chris Boget of Lake Champlain Land Trust. RPSP was conserved in 2001 and donated to the state. Its walking trails and rocky beach are open to the public year round.*



*The Roy Farm, home to Lakeside Jersey Farm, was conserved in 2008 and is home to a prize-winning herd of Jersey cows.*



# An Update on East Shore Vineyard: First Growing Season at the former Landon Farm

## Planting to Begin in Early June

Ben Durant and his crew at East Shore Vineyard are hard at work these days. They are getting the fields ready for summer planting, setting up the barn as their wine processing facility, and renovating the house into a tasting room all at once. They are currently rooting cuttings taken from the vines at their Grand Isle property, which will be planted in the fields above the farmstead in June.

They hope to open their new tasting room sometime this summer. They will be building a deck for outside seating, and converting the first floor kitchen into a tasting and sales room. In the meantime their Burlington tasting room will be open, located in the Church Street Marketplace.



*The fields at East Shore Vineyard are plowed in preparation for June planting of vines.*

## East Shore Vineyard to Host SHLT Annual Celebration

We are excited to announce that South Hero Land Trust's Annual Celebration of Conservation and Community will be held at East Shore Vineyard in July! This will be a wonderful opportunity to explore the new operation at the former Landon Farm, meet Ben and the East Shore Vineyard crew, visit the Landon Community and Round Pond State Park trails, catch up on SHLT news, and more! We are pleased to present Emily Boedecker as our keynote speaker. Emily is the new Director at Local Motion, the organization responsible for the Island Line bike route and the Bike Ferry from Colchester to South Hero. Emily once worked for the Vermont Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, which was one of the partner organizations in the Landon Farm Conservation Project. We are excited to hear her speak about transitions and their importance- for landscapes, communities, and organizations. Invitations with more details on the event will be sent soon!



*South Hero Land Trust staff and board take a tour of East Shore Vineyard while planning the 2015 Annual Celebration.*

## Landon Community Trail Remains Open

The Landon Community Trail, a public access trail created and maintained by South Hero Land Trust and the Lake Champlain Land Trust will remain open as East Shore Vineyard transitions into farm ownership. We hope that the community will enjoy this great resource! Please remember that the trail is on a working farm, and that public access is restricted to the designated trail, for your safety and the safety of the farmers! A trail map is located in the parking area off of Landon Road. We would love to hear about what you find on the trail- wildflowers, trees, snakes, frogs, birds... please share your stories and photographs!

# Champlain Islands Grown: 10<sup>th</sup> Edition of Guide Published in 2015

We are thrilled to be publishing the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Champlain Islands Grown Guide to Agriculture* this spring! It will be available in early June, at local farm stands, stores, and the Champlain Islands Farmers' Market, as well as the South Hero Land Trust Office. With over 50 farms, restaurants, markets, and other agricultural and food businesses, the *Guide* connects the community to local food, farms, and community events.

## Celebrate Farms & Food in the Islands: Summertime Agricultural Events

**Champlain Islands Farmers' Market:** With a variety of locally produced food, fiber, flowers, and art, the Farmers' Market is a great place to find local edibles, handmade gifts, and a lively community atmosphere. The market opens Memorial Day Weekend!

Wednesdays in South Hero: St. Rose of Lima Church, 3-6 pm.  
Saturdays in Grand Isle: St. Joseph's Church, 10pm-2pm.

**Heart of the Islands Open Farm & Studio Tour:** The annual Open Farm & Studio Tour features farms and artists' studios throughout Grand Isle County as they open their doors and fences for a weekend of fun and education. Learn how farmers grow their crops and raise animals; watch artisans weave, paint, and create; and enjoy local natural areas!

July 10 & 11, 10am-5pm. Maps available throughout the county.

**South Hero Land Trust Annual Celebration:** Join us at East Shore Vineyard for South Hero Land Trust's Annual Celebration of Conservation and Community! Enjoy farm tours, wildlife walks, and the best potluck picnic of the year! RSVP appreciated, check out our website for more information, [www.shlt.org](http://www.shlt.org).

July 19, 10am-2pm, East Shore Vineyard, 20 East Shore Road, South Hero.

**In Good Taste: Savor the Islands:** Join the farmers, vintners, brewers, and chefs of Northwest Vermont for an evening of fresh local foods, culinary delights, regional wines and handcrafted beers, all for the tasting. Enjoy a beautiful afternoon at Knight Point State Park and an evening under the tent, sampling the deliciousness, all created, produced or sourced from our bountiful region! Sample and purchase local goods at this special event, hosted by the Lake Champlain Islands Agriculture Network and the Northwest VT Healthy Roots Collaborative.

August 16, 4-7 pm, Knight Point State Park. Info and tickets at [www.islandsfarmsandfood.com](http://www.islandsfarmsandfood.com).

**Champlain Islands Farm & Food Festival:** Health Hero Farm is hosting the third annual Islands Farm & Food Festival. This free, family friendly celebration will highlight farms from Northwest Vermont with food, demonstrations, and activities.

August 30, 3-6 pm, Health Hero Farm, South Hero.



# SPRING 2015 NEWSLETTER



Address Service Requested

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South Hero, VT 05486



## SAVE THE DATE!



### Annual Celebration of Conservation & Community

**Sunday, July 19, 2015**  
**East Shore Vineyard, South Hero**

Potluck Picnic, Farm Tours, Nature Walks, Children's Activities & more!  
Keynote Speaker Emily Boedecker of Local Motion

*Save the date! More details coming soon!*